ORGAN INSTITUTE

QUARTERLY

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Photographic Essay

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ORGAN INSTITUTE QUARTERLY

Volume 2, Number 2 Spring 1952

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Published four times yearly — winter, spring, summer, autumn — by the Organ Institute at 104 Salem Street, Andover, Massachusetts. Price: 25 cents a copy, annual subscription $1. Application for entry as second-class matter is pending at Andover, Massachusetts.

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The Importance of Acoustics

Ray Berry

It is not unusual for organists to complain of the acoustic properties of their churches, and they are usually justified. And yet desired improvements are seldom undertaken because hardly anyone knows exactly what should be done. Most musicians know little if anything about the interrelation of acoustics and music. Without a practical working knowledge of acoustics, no musician may presume himself completely educated. Literature on the subject of this relationship is almost nonexistent. These were three of the important facts brought out at the December 1951 American Guild of Organists' panel forum on acoustics. This initial project, intended to create awareness in all persons and groups concerned with the design and function of the church, clearly indicated the importance of certain avenues of development.

Firstly, cooperative exploration and study by unbiased and unprejudiced members of each of the professions connected with the design and function of churches must be made possible. Secondly, findings appropriate to the use of members of each group should be disseminated to all of them.

Architects, acousticians, organ builders, musicians, musicologists, ministers, and other representatives are among the related group factors. At present, these groups are collaboratively doing little to improve a badly neglected situation. Ignorance of the relation of acoustics to the design and function of the church makes it imperative that these groups be persuaded to willing cooperation, looking toward publishing information of benefit and assistance to all.

Acousticians, acoustical engineers, and physicists are competent to design and effect sound control; but control is only half the problem for a church. The acoustics profession must acquire a knowing awareness about the *quality* of sound in the church. Organ builder Charles McManis wrote the author: "I should like to suggest the close relationship between the acoustical 'feel' of a sanctuary and the quality of religious feeling.... The purpose of public worship is to knit individual worshipers into a unified congregation where the individual loses his identity in the 'church universal'.... With acoustical treatment absorbing a large part of congregational (as well as choir and organ) sounds, the effect is precisely that of the intimate night club where each party is secluded by sound absorption.... Low frequencies beget crying-in-the-beer emotions; high frequencies lift the spirit to higher things. It is a well-established fact that most acoustical materials absorb much more of the high frequencies than the low."

Materials for acoustical control may today be designed which will meet specifically any requirement. It may be accepted that, wherever sound absorption is deemed necessary, such controls can be effected which will enhance, rather than distort, musical sound and speech. But these controls

must be designed to act upon *all* sound frequencies at approximately the same rate. Otherwise sound will be altered and essential under- and overtone harmonic series will be weakened or lost, thus distorting the original patterns which organ pipes have been built and voiced to produce.

If the high frequencies are absorbed faster than the low, much of the brilliance and color of the organ disappears. The result is a heaviness, a lugubriousness in tone which makes clarity and definition in performance well-nigh impossible to achieve. However, it is quite possible to effect a proper result in acoustical environment for any building; but it must be accepted that this environment is to be determined only with the assistance of qualified acoustical experts who can carry through from design to the extremely important supervision of installation of acoustical materials.

Organ builder G. Donald Harrison, in a letter to the author, mentioned another important point. "The relationship of height, distance, and space generally to the music is of paramount importance; and what the eye sees in terms of space and dimensions the ear must receive in terms of sound. If there is a great deal of hard-looking material in a building, the sound must behave as though it were hard material...." Qualified acousticians and architects can successfully meet such a requirement.

Not all architects are informed in the science of sound. Because of the disparate complexities involved, an architect without such knowledge is not fully qualified to design a room in which both speech and music will be heard. No one may arbitrarily state a precise optimum reverberation period for a church. Such will be ascertained in relation to the function of worship in a particular building and denomination, with due reference to acoustical laws. Cooperation from architectural bodies in future collaborative study is yet a matter of conjecture. Regrettably, up to the present time the Bureau of Architecture of the National Council of Churches and the Church Architectural Guild of America have given no indication of willingness to cooperate. Such collaboration apparently will more readily come from architectural groups independent of church domination. However, it is anticipated that all architectural organizations, when true aims and purposes are fully understood, will express the same eagerness to cooperate in future endeavors already shown by the American Institute of Architects through Mr. Walter A. Taylor, research director of the Institute.

Investigation has proved that, on the whole, architects blame organ builders for being unwilling generally to make concessions about organ installation — for being inflexible, sometimes uninformed in their demands. On the other hand, organ builders blame architects, church boards, and others for being less than willing to cooperate fully on the matters of proper location and adequate space requirements for the organ. All too often the organ is thought of or considered only after the architect's plans have been approved and builder's contracts let, resulting in costly revisions which could have been prevented had consideration been given while drawings were yet on the architect's sketchboard.

Until clergy, architects, organ builders, and others can separate

church-goers' thinking from the frame of reference of their own memories, significant progress in the architectural, acoustical, and musical design of buildings will be difficult to achieve. But such freedom, which would result in vibrant, dynamic, realistic, meaningful production and projection of musical sound and speech, will come only when the church-goer has been won away from some of his powerful eye and ear associations inculcated in childhood and strengthened in adult years.

Few musicians are at all aware of the importance of acoustics in their profession. Published information giving data on the practical application of the science of sound to musical endeavor is scarce. These facts make it imperative that musicians use their influence (1) to create sufficient interest to produce action, (2) to promote action in terms of collaborative research by all groups concerned, and (3) to publish the conclusions reached in co-operative investigation.

"It is my feeling that a great deal of the unrest which exists in the organ world is due today to a lack of experience with acoustics on the part of many players who regretfully play inappropriately for the building concerned. Their tempi and other rhythmic details are often entirely out of phase with what is going on in the building." So wrote Donald Harrison to the author.

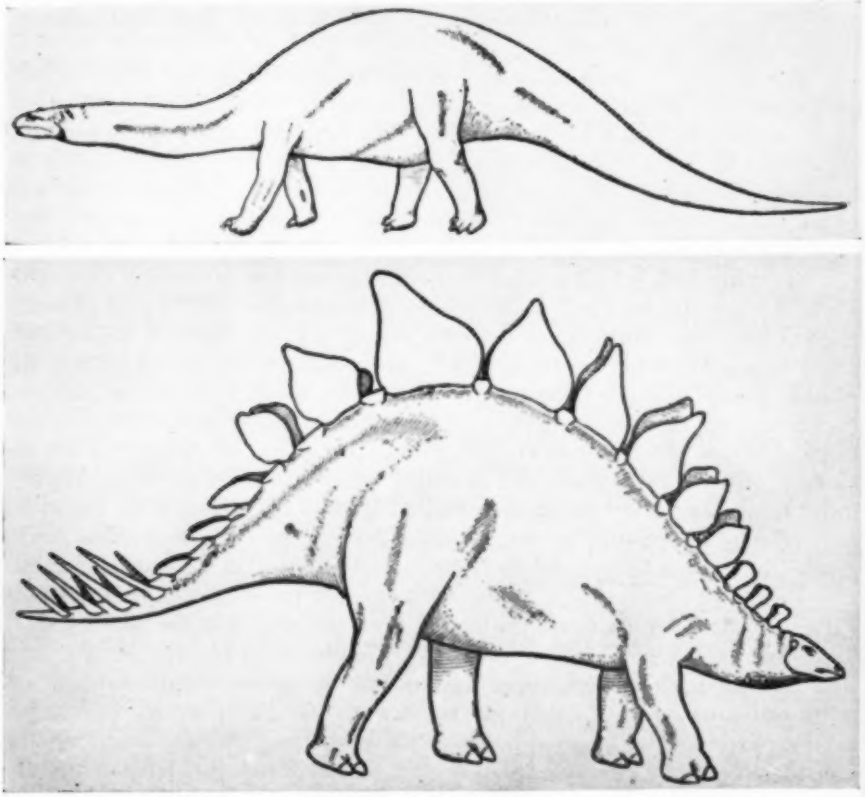
Some eminent recitalists, especially when heard in cathedrals and large churches where reverberation periods are great, obviously do not include acoustical properties, and resulting effects, in their thinking. If they did, "tempi and other rhythmic details," as well as registration, would be far different. It would be highly illuminating if some recitalists could realistically listen to themselves from the area where their auditors sit.

Pedagogs who refuse to recognize or accept the importance of acoustical environment must share the blame for some performance heard today. Inflexible pedagogical rules, allegedly capable of producing clarity and definition in performance under any and all acoustical conditions, do not work out successfully in practical application. There is no one technique, no one particular tempo, and no single method of registration which may be considered equally effective in all acoustical environments. Rules are valuable; but a controlled flexibility in performance, based upon thorough knowledge of how acoustical properties affect music, is needed. No two buildings or rooms ever have precisely the same acoustical properties — the same problems to solve, in the effort to make the performance of music alive for the listener.

Collaborative study and evaluation, decisions and criteria will be difficult to accomplish. The importance of authoritative information, specifically explained and adroitly directed to the attention of all professional groups who so desperately need it, demands willing cooperation from all persons so called upon. Until definitive studies are completed and their results made available, the potentially fine performances of great organ and choral literature will remain dimmed by the aural confusion of bad acoustics. There are eager souls now pioneering in this effort. May their endeavors be augmented manifold by the influence of all musicians.

Evolutionary Types

PETE HARDY—KEN MINARD



Above, *Brontosaurus Excelsus.* Below, *Stegosaurus Ungulatus.*

Millions of years ago these remarkable thirty-seven-ton creatures roamed the earth. They lived and flourished in an environment quite different from the world in which we live, and became extinct when those conditions ceased to exist. Their odd proportions, with such massive middle and lower parts, slender necks and tiny heads, are not unlike those of an organ in which heavy 8′ and 16′ elements and loud basses predominate, with weak or nonexistent upper work. Their clumsy imbalance must have made locomotion difficult and cumbersome; in order to effect a change of direction they were obliged to swing their tails around in the direction opposite to that toward which they wanted to turn. Their movements must have been about as graceful as the effect of a lively Bach fugue played on the full flue-work of an allegedly "romantic" organ.

PITHECANTHROPUS

This gallant ancestor of many of us looks powerful enough to overcome all competition, like the calliope-voiced diapasons and tubas of a bygone era. (Note arched upper lip and coarse nicking.) His facial expression seems to

suggest a certain lack of definition in his thoughts. This vagueness is like the obscurity that characterizes those faint traces of a composer's musical ideas which are able to survive performance on the thick-toned instruments of a generation ago.

A NEANDERTHAL MAN

This prominent athlete of the old Stone Age must have inspired terror in the hearts of all rivals. Note the heavy thickness of his torso, the shortness of his neck and of his whole figure, and how his entire weight is concentrated. He looks powerful but musclebound, the way most 8′ organs used to sound.

AROUND RIGHT END TO THE PROMISED LAND

Here a fleet-footed Andover halfback (44) assists in the education of an Exeter rival. For line, proportion, and graceful movement, we prefer this modern figure to the one shown opposite. For similar reasons we like the modern organ.

As has been remarked in the recent flood of words about "classic" and "romantic" organs, "beauty is in the eye of the beholder," and, supposedly, also in the ear of the listener. It is difficult to understand how any designer of organs can today perpetrate such an extreme anachronism as an organ of the peculiar type that resembles the foregoing prehistoric monsters. The contemporary environment of informed musical opinion will not permit the prolonged survival of such; and, like the *Brontosaurus excelsus* and the *Stegosaurus ungulatus*, they will soon become extinct.

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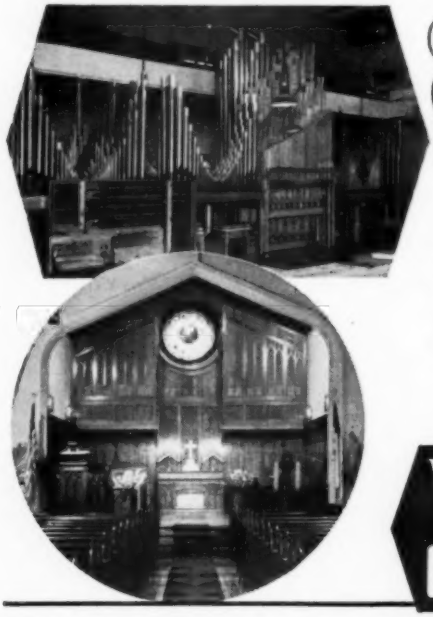

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"Back to Methuselah"?

By Henry Willis

By all means — in search of information and to glean the best of historical use in all branches of Art and Science, but not for direct reproduction in the ancient form.

In painting, no normal person would suggest a return to the actual techniques of medieval art. A direct renewal of the type of work produced by Botticelli, for example, is unthinkable, but much can be learnt by a study of that artist's grouping and colour schemes for use in a more modern idiom. So it should be with the design and voicing of the organs of today: full research into the ideals of the past with suitable adaptation to modern use and requirements — in short, a combination of methods, past and present, to the best advantage.

The exponents of the so-called Baroque period of organ voicing and design, which can roughly be described as covering the 17th century and the first part of the 18th, appear to overlook the fact that there were as many diverse and divergent schools of thought in those times as there are in this country to-day. To talk of a "Baroque" organ conveys no accurate information. What type of instrument — German, Italian, French? And who is the national artist concerned? At the end of the 17th century leading representative organ-builders may be cited as Silbermann (Germany), Clicquot (France), and Antegnati (Italy), all of an identical period yet differing in their tonal ideals and presentation: Silbermann with his well-balanced ensembles and silvery yet glittering upper work and mixtures; Antegnati — typifying the Italian development — with great brilliance in upper work and what many deem a superabundance of mixtures. With both builders, chorus reeds were little developed, taking a negligible part in the "organo pleno." Clicquot, on the other hand, produced ensembles working up to families of chorus reeds completely overwhelming the flue work. There was a fairly close analogy between the Silbermann and Antegnati ensembles, and these may be said to give a fair average representation of the ideals of middle Europe at that time. Comparison with French design of the period shows striking divergences. English organs are unworthy of citation, being under-developed and, without Pedal divisions, incomplete and unrepresentative.

Having explained that there is no truly international type of Baroque organ, we can consider the well-nigh universal siting of instruments of that period. Mostly placed on galleries at the West End of the Church, with ample height above and the utmost freedom for tonal projection, or alternately in Choir galleries or transept positions with equal amenities for tonal egress and diffusion, we find these instruments ideally situated. The light wind pressures necessitated by primitive blowing and wind storage equipment — 2¾ inches being a fair average to quote — yet enabled thrill-

ing results to be obtained, especially in Churches with a reasonable reverberation period.

It should be emphasised that these 17th century artist-craftsmen well knew, albeit empirically, that emphasis on the 8 ft. line was not correct for the accompaniment of either the choir or the congregation, the 4 ft. line leading up to the upper work having greater importance. Specifications of the period make this abundantly clear.

Differing international uses must also be borne in mind. In Middle Europe, and in Germany especially, the accompaniment and support of lusty congregational singing was the more important duty laid upon the organ and organist, together with voluntaries taking the form of compositions for the organ as a solo instrument of which a number had become available. In France an antiphonal use had developed, the *grand orgue* at the west end crashing in with interludes, chiefly extemporisations based on the plainsong of the Mass: this grand use may still be heard in many of the glorious Cathedrals and greater Churches in France, and in addition, at a late Low Mass, organ solos are becoming, perhaps unfortunately, more common.

Accepting that the highest development of the Baroque period was reached circa 1700 and allowing for national divergences in type, we face the depressing fact that a period of retrogression and loss took place from about 1725 onwards for over a hundred years. The glories of the older masters were "improved upon" by those of lesser stature without real understanding or artistic conception. A typical example is the organ built in 1750 at Weingarten by Gabler which, despite its fine situation in a superb building, is unfortunate both in its tonal apportionment, lay-out and finish — this allowing for the inevitable deterioration over a long period of years and not too skilful maintenance. I say nothing of the unfortunate additions on high pressure wind that took place toward the end of the 19th century. In France and Italy a similar sad state of affairs is recorded — a period of artistic degradation, and even despoliation of old masterpieces, in the history of organ building.

Then we come to the revival that took place in the third and fourth decades of the 19th century led by Walcker in Germany and Cavaillé-Coll in France, the emphasis being, of course, upon Cavaillé-Coll who developed the historical French design in accordance with the taste, requirements, and demands of that romantic period in musical development.

To many the name Cavaillé-Coll is coupled with the "invention" of harmonic flutes and high pressure chorus reeds. Although it is true that Cavaillé-Coll developed both harmonic flutes and high pressure chorus reeds, the truth is that overblowing flutes were already well known and the use of higher pressures for chorus reeds was foreshadowed, if not developed. Cavaillé-Coll, with the use of slightly higher pressures for the trebles of chorus reeds, was enabled to obtain improved reed choruses, then of sensational effect. He coupled with his improved chorus reeds the high development of quint and unison mixtures (third-sounding ranks being, normally,

eschewed) of well-nigh stunning brilliance. On the other hand Cavaillé-Coll did not carry the French tradition of the 17th century, with its emphasis on the use of independent mutation ranks including the tierce.

Without connection or consultation with Cavaillé-Coll, a great resurgence took place in England when Father Willis designed and constructed the instrument he displayed in the Great Exhibition of 1851 (and this undoubted fact was underlined by Dr. McKie in his Presidential Address to the Incorporated Association of Organists in congress at Birmingham in August, 1951), followed by the epoch-making organ at St. George's Hall, Liverpool, in 1854. These instruments revealed research and knowledge far beyond the ordinary, an improvement upon contemporary German and French designs of an individual character. The older "classical" basis was emphasised, together with a full development of ensemble, enhanced pressures for chorus reeds and many individual solo voices of beauty and utility. The St. George's Hall organ may fairly be deemed the base upon which English Organ-building developed.

In the 1890's, the tonal monstrosities by Hope-Jones were perpetrated, coupling the practical abolition of mixture work, over-developed quintadenas and diapasons of undue foundational tone with repressed harmonic development, huge scale and hooting flutes, dull and heavy-toned chorus reeds, with little harmonic development, so called "strings" of tiny scale producing thin and scratchy tones and other weird departures from the older and formerly accepted basic designs which, for many years, had given such fine service and superb results. Perhaps the most deplorable result was the impression upon even the leading organists of the period that mixture work in itself was undesirable; that this was so is made evident by the specifications of instruments designed and constructed in that period. The over-emphasis on big and fundamental diapason tone, made on the absurd and wholly illogical grounds that such constituted the best tonality to accompany and back up congregational singing, was another unfortunate factor resulting, in so many instances, in the first Diapason on the Great Organ bearing no relation at all to the Diapason Chorus but sticking out like a sore thumb — so much so that the knowledgeable organist will never use such a stop in full ensemble. Readers will be aware of scores of cases where this kind of unbalance is present and of the necessity of cutting such a stop off the combinations.

As English tonal design began to show encouraging signs of a return to sanity, another blow was struck at clarity and cohesion by the adoption and adaptation of the debasements of the cinema organ (which ran its course in this country from about 1925 to 1939 with appalling effect upon public taste) chiefly taking the form of the use of manual extension. This meretricious system, as is well known, involves expecting an organ pipe to speak at the same time in different pitches — which, as Euclid so frequently enunciated, "is absurd." This inartistic misuse of the scientific advances in the development and use of reliable electrically operated organ mechanisms won favour from many who should have known better, the argument being

that more "effects" could be produced from each rank of pipes. As if "effects" were the end-all of artistic requirements!

The use of manual extension, adopted — if not "invented" — by Hope-Jones in his "Unit Orchestra," then known in the U.S.A. as Hope-Jones's "one-man-band," was carried to its logical conclusion in the cinema type organ, for from one extended rank of 97 notes the following pitches were extracted: 16, 8, 5-1/3, 4, 2-1/3, 2, and, in some instances, 1-3/5 (the tierce). To say nothing of the inevitable doubling and therefore non-sounding notes (for an organ pipe can only speak once at the same time, no matter how many keys operate it!), the effect of the use of quints and even the tierce from a tempered unison rank must be heard to be believed.

The Cinema organ on the lines stated above "died" in America in 1929, when an endeavour was made, by organ manufacturers anxious to retain their trade, to utilise the same principles for Church organs. This effort — most fortunately — proved abortive; the leading manufacturers of that type of instrument ceased manufacture. The use of manual extension rapidly declined to its so called "harmless" use on flute and similar soft ranks, with the obtainment of a 16 ft. and perhaps a 4 ft. from the small Great Diapason and a 16 ft. from the small reed. Such use, as indicated, found favour in certain quarters in this country and still, I regret to say, continues, although its extent is, I think and trust, becoming more and more limited as the general sense of appreciation and good taste improves. That a welcome revival and understanding of the correct principles of tonal design is taking place, even to a somewhat limited degree, is in no small measure due to the protagonists of a Baroque revival, for the use of manual extension is in complete opposition to the clarified design essential in the make-up of instruments influenced by that period of tonal design.

We should, therefore, welcome the Baroque revival as not only giving food for thought, but as a clear indication of a desire to return to homogeneous and clean design. The error into which purists and extremists sometimes fall is to urge a complete return to 17th century practice; in this country, at least, such reversion would not meet the requirements of either service or recital use. The purely 17th century instrument has not the tonal equipment for the adequate performance of organ music of the immediate post-Bach, the "romantic", period which can be said to cover most organ compositions up to say 1925, or some of the more severe, austere and exploratory works by the modern composers of the second, third and fourth decades of this century.

It can be broadly and boldly stated that for the correct rendition of organ music of all periods the following provisions must take first plaec in tonal design for all but the very smallest instruments: —

(i) A flue chorus that must include a cornet or mixture — which, for the smaller organs, will be found to be more useful on the Swell.

(ii) 4 ft. stops of good harmonic development both on Great and Swell to provide what has been so well described as the "singing line."

(iii) A Swell chorus reed, preferably a Trumpet, to give the necessary *éclat.*

(iv) A Pedal organ — for which the use of extension is permissible (pedalling in octaves being exceptional) — up to the 4 ft. register. If funds permit, a Violone or Open Bass together with an Octave Diapason or Principal of 8 ft. pitch to give clarity — and this should be an independent stop.

(v) The Great Organ 8 ft. Flute should be a Stopped Diapason or Gedackt with a good trace of the first upper partial, the twelfth, for interest and to ensure blend.

(vi) The English use calls for a really soft stop on the Great for pianissimo accompaniment use — a Dulciana or its equivalent.

For the smaller organs the one-time inevitable Diapason is by no means an essential; a really brightly voiced Rohr Flöte or Lieblich Gedackt 8 ft. will be found to provide the required 8 ft. tone if the 4 ft. be a Gemshorn, Fugara or broad-toned Viola with correct harmonic development — leading up to a Cornet 12, 15, 17, or Mixture 15, 19, 22, in each case the accent being upon the 15th rank, which will in both cases run throughout without breaks. The presence of an effective Swell-box is taken for granted.

Three-manuals: It is unwise to proceed to the design of a three-manual unless an adequate two-manual scheme has been laid down as a foundation. The third manual, usually known as the Choir Organ, gives the opportunity for planning upon quasi-baroque lines, and such will be found the most satisfactory to work upon whether unenclosed or enclosed. On this question of enclosure it should be borne in mind that with artistic voicing there need be no loss of freshness of tone, while the gainfulness of enclosure presents very real advantages. With the third manual the design and character of the softer Great and Swell organ stops can receive modification. The basis of the Choir Organ will be on open and stopped flute tone, including those invaluable mutations the Nazard and Tierce which should be independent but can, if space and/or funds are restricted, be combined as a Sext 12. and 17 — the interval of the sixth.

Consequent upon the sound basis laid down above, further development in the number of stops will follow an indicated sequence that should follow naturally — the introduction of a soft 16 ft. reed on the Swell, or a Great double, become logical additions. The inclusion of solo voices will not take place except upon the larger instruments and even then those capable of ensemble use — for example a Corno-di-Bassetto — will come first.

It can be stated, without fear of rebuttal, that a complete and well-balanced two-manual is to be preferred to a restricted three-manual, and that a well-planned and balanced three-manual — upon which every required provision can be made — is much to be preferred to a four-manual when the fourth manual is usually provided on grounds of prestige and not because of any magical facilities given. I cite the rebuilt instrument at All Souls' Church, Langham Place, as an example of a three-manual instrument — providing well-nigh everything that is desirable for the rendition

of organ music of all periods. It is taken for granted that modern mechanism with the required couplers and accessories is available to give adequate control over the registers present.

The very nature of an article of this description and the limitation of space restrict it to broad and general lines, but within its compass I have endeavoured to handle a problem, itself on the highest level, in a manner that it is hoped may prove of value to both the professional and amateur organist in their search for perfection in organ design.

Before concluding, I would like to comment upon two theories held by so many students of the 17th century organ: these are the "light wind pressures" and "no nicking" cult — for these two points are inter-related. The use of light pressures is praiseworthy where the organ is superbly sited with complete egress of its tones, and with the use of light pressures the need for nicking becomes less and less the lower the pressure utilised: the reason is simple — the passing of the compressed air through the "flue" of a pipe is at the velocity decided by the voicer. With the use of very low pressures the velocity is low and therefore the edge-tones set up at the languard and lower lip are negligible and controllable without resort to nicking, but with an increase in wind pressure as necessitated in large buildings or unsuitable organ chambers, the higher velocity of the wind creates edge tones of an undesirable character, giving dissonant harmonics which can be and are extremely unpleasant; judicious nicking enables these edge tones to be adjusted exactly in accordance with the desired tonal character aimed at. There are many other factors that have to be borne in mind, for the speech of an organ pipe is a coupled system — but that matter alone would require an article to itself.

Finally, I ask that all concerned should bend their minds towards the production of the ideal organ which would embody the best features of all periods. Only the closest co-operation between the organist and the organ builder can ensure the desired result.

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The Swell Organ

ERNEST WHITE

An Englishman named Jordan is credited with producing the first Swell division. He should rather be credited with producing the first Swell mechanism with venetian blind shutters that could be controlled from the keydesk. All that wordage is necessary to get around the fact that there were numerous examples, predating Jordan by more than one hundred years, of "Echo divisions" enclosed in boxes but with fixed covers or openings that had to be adjusted at the swell box in just the same way that we now control a Vox Humana stop by putting a box within a box, then adjusting the volume of tone by the opening of the small box.

Intensity is the basic quality that allows a stop to be successful in an expression chamber. Hence our Swell organ has shaken down into a pattern of reeds, mixtures, and flues that have enough harmonic point to their tone to survive the perils attendant upon enclosure.

Reeds form the basis of the usual Swell, and they are designed upon an 8′ basis because the tone of the 16′ and clarion is generally subservient to the 8′ in quality and sometimes in quantity.

Depending upon how much money may be spent, there are rudiments of three other tone families to be represented: Principals, Flutes, and Strings. There is usually some pattern of upward development among these families, culminating in a Mixture that is a compromise between the upper work that the flues require and that suitable for reeds.

The Swell division works out best when the reeds are kept on the small but intense side and the flues given a chance. The mixture tone may then serve the common purpose with ease.

Modern Swells have an unessential though colorful tone quality produced by celeste ranks. A set of pipes is provided to sound with a string or flute, then tuned slightly sharp from the parent tone. The resulting beats between the two ranks produce a fuzzy-pitch effect comparable to the ethereal results of out-of-focus portrait photography of twenty-five years ago. This warm beating quality is a legitimate effect so long as it is kept on the level at which the pipes were voiced.

Since the effect is that of an in-tune stop beating with an out-of-tune stop of the same sort, a balance is maintained. This balance is disturbed when other stops are added to the combination, and is utterly destroyed by further additions. The effect of combining six or eight other stops with one or two celestes is to overpower the off-pitch ones to such an extent that the whole merely seems to be unpleasantly out of tune. Celeste tone is a color, and may be rightly used as a contrast with or against a similar amount of straight tone. This class of tone may not be used as a general basis for playing, but only for especially suitable passages; nor should any celeste tone ever be used in accompanying voices or other instruments.

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Busman's Holiday

Several times, in recent Sunday morning excursions to different churches, I have been reminded of that passage in Hugh Walpole's novel "The Cathedral" in which there is a description of chanting by the cathedral choir. "The two sides of the choir were now rivaling one another over the psalms, hurling verses at one another with breathless speed, as though they said: 'Here's the ball. Catch. Oh, you *are* slow!'" While such antiphonal chanting is uncommon here, I have nevertheless heard choirs rush through sacred texts at "breathless speed," slowing down only to vigorously thump out the inflections. The words were unintelligible and devoid of significance.

In most churches the texts which are set to chants are integral parts of the service, so that the main essential is to give utterance to them in a suitably dignified manner, rather than to repeat an innocuous little piece of music over and over. The psalm-tones, or chant tunes, should be regarded as mere formulae for intoning the words. As such, they are unlike other pieces of choral music, in which the words and music are each adjusted to the other. In chanting, the music must always be adjusted to the words. Chanting should be regarded simply as a reading of the sacred text, intoned instead of spoken. Each verse is a recitation, ornamented at certain points with musical inflections. In the older unisonous Gregorian chants, the melodic inflections are clearly felt to be a kind of musical punctuation. In Anglican chants, however, this characteristic is obscured by the chord structure, which seems to imply musical accents at each new measure and change of harmony. Such regular musical accentuation should be assiduously avoided, so that the rhythm of the words will prevail throughout each verse. Too often a rigid beat with regular accent is imposed on the words.

Although our language does have long and short syllables in the literal sense that some take a little more time to pronounce than others, it is true that in deliberate reading, in which care is taken to enunciate each syllable distinctly, they tend to approach a uniform length. This approximate unit of length should be the measure of every syllable in both recitations and inflections. It should also apply to the individual notes when single syllables are prolonged through two notes, and when an extra note is added for an extra syllable in an inflection.

It is imperative that both recitation and inflection should proceed at the same pace. To accomplish this, many choirs must learn to take the recitations more slowly and to keep moving without slowing down and "counting time" for the inflections. The avoidance of false accents in the inflections is a problem in all harmonized chanting, and no part of any verse should be sung in "strict time" in the usual sense.

A good method to teach a choir to chant correctly is as follows:

After first learning the tune without words by singing it to any convenient syllable or vowel, begin a careful study of a single verse by having them read it aloud together using speech, not singing. This will not be as

easy as might be supposed, because they should read deliberately, giving clear enunciation to every syllable and sound, even the little unaccented ones, while at the same time preserving the accents of normal speech. When they can read it beautifully and distinctly, perfectly together (which may not be for some time), then have them intone it on the first note or chord of the tune, preserving all the characteristic syllabic relationships developed in speech.

At this point it is possible to discover and appreciate the true value of chanting. Sacred texts assume a new dignity and impressiveness when deliberately and distinctly intoned on the notes of a common chord by a choir that enunciates every syllable and consonant together with perfect unanimity of accent. Of course this grandeur and solemnity are completely absent when the "hurry-up-stop" method is followed!

When the reading on one note has been perfected, then, and then only, permit the choir to introduce the inflections, taking care that in so doing they alter neither the pace of reading nor the rhythmic relationships. The words must continue to flow in their natural rhythm right through the inflections without lengthening or shortening any syllable to conform to the time value of any note, or accenting any syllable because it is sung on the first note of a measure. There are no musical measures or time values in good chanting. The only alterations in speech rhythm are the slight prolongation of the last syllable of each verse and the occasional lengthening of a syllable sung to two notes. This last step will be the most difficult, especially for older singers, who have long-established habits to overcome.

Each verse must be carefully studied in the same way. It is remarkable how the varied rhythmic patterns of each verse can give new character and interest to repetitions of the tune.

With frequent repetition and increased experience, this method becomes easy; and singers can become so adept in speech-rhythm chanting that they need no rehearsing in it. Such was the situation prior to the last war at Nashdom Abbey in England, where the choir of English Benedictines sang a full program of liturgical music at daily services, and yet their director boasted that his choir never had a rehearsal. The correct use having once been established, new members were given brief but explicit instruction in the general principles of chanting and told to adjust their singing to that of the older members.

The organ accompaniment should only provide a background, and any attempt to lead the singers by means of it is impractical. In congregational chants, the voices of the choir must be relied upon to lead, since the natural flow of words gives rhythmic shape and accent to the music.

One aberration that is somewhat widely practiced is the introduction of a pronounced retard at the end of the "Gloria Patri" with a dramatic pause before the prolonged final "Amen." Such pomposity collapses of its own weight and detracts from the real dignity of the service.

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GREAT (unenclosed)
16′ Quintaten
8′ Principal
8′ Diapason
8′ Bourdon
4′ Octave
4′ Rohrflote
2⅔′ Quint
2′ Super Octave
1⅗′ Tierce
III-V Fourniture
III Cymbel
String Organ on Great
Bombarde " " "

SWELL
16′ Contra Salicional
16′ Rohr Gedeckt
8′ Geigen Principal
8′ Stopped Flute
Salicional (extension of Contra Salicional)
8′ Voix Celeste
8′ Flauto Dolce
8′ Flute Celeste
4′ Octave Geigen
4′ Flauto Traverso
2⅔′ Nazard
2′ Flautina
1⅗′ Tierce
IV Plein Jeu
16′ Fagotto
8′ Trompette
8′ Oboe
8′ Vox Humana
4′ Clarion
String Organ on Swell
Bombarde " " "

CHOIR
16′ Contra Viola
8′ Viola
8′ Concert Flute
8′ English Diapason
8′ Viole Sourdine
8′ Viole Celeste
8′ Dulciana
8′ Unda Maris
4′ Harmonic Flute
4′ Fugara
2′ Zauberflote
16′ Bassoon
8′ Clarinet
8′ Cor Anglais
String Organ on Choir
Bombarde " " "

POSITIV (unenclosed)
8′ Nachthorn
4′ Koppelflote
2⅔′ Nazard
2′ Principal
1⅗′ Tierce
1′ Sifflote
III Zimbel

SOLO
8′ Doppelflote
8′ Orchestral Violoncello
8′ Violoncello Celeste
4′ Concert Flute
8′ French Horn
8′ Orchestral Oboe
8′ Tuba
String Organ on Solo
Bombarde " " "

STRING (in Solo box)
16′ Contra Viole
8′ Viole de Gambe
8′ Gambe Celeste
8′ Viole d'Orchestre
8′ Viole Celeste
8′ Gemshorn
8′ Gemshorn Celeste
4′ Violina

BOMBARDE (in Solo box)
16′ Bombarde
8′ Trompette Harmonique
4′ Clarion Harmonique
IV-VI Grand Chorus

PEDAL
32′ Contra Bourdon
16′ Principal
16′ Sub Bass
8′ Principal
8′ Gedecktpommer
5⅓′ Quint
4′ Super Octave
4′ Nachthorn
2′ Spitzflote
V Mixture
32′ Contra Posaune
16′ Posaune
8′ Trumpet
4′ Clarion
2′ Rohr Schalmei
16′ Quintaten (from Great)
16′ Contra Salicional (from Swell)
16′ Lieblich Gedeckt (from Swell)
16′ Contra Viole (from String)
8′ Still Gedeckt (from Swell)
8′ Salicional (from Swell)
16′ Bombarde (from Bombarde)
16′ Bassoon (from Choir)
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Close to upper right margin, the low building with dark-colored gable roof is Parish House adjoining Christ Church Cathedral, which is hidden by tall buildings at the left. Arthur E. Hall operates the sound effects and directs a beautiful choir there in post formerly held by Arthur Howes and Edward B. Gammons. The latter, in collaboration with G. Donald Harrison, designed the organ, which is considered one of Aeolian-Skinner's most effective installations, notwithstanding its adverse acoustical environment.

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• Ray Berry, equally well known for his organ concerts and for his progressive leadership as Dean of the Colorado Springs Chapter and Regional Publicity Director of the American Guild of Organists, has based his article *Acoustics* on a panel discussion which he led at Chicago in December.

• The dramatic photograph of a modern athlete on page 11 was taken by Peter Hardy. The others in *Evolutionary Types* were reproduced by Kenneth S. Minard, with special permission from John Wiley & Sons, Inc., publishers of *Historical Geology*, by Carl O. Dunbar.

• THE ORGAN INSTITUTE QUARTERLY takes pleasure in announcing that Messrs. Edward B. Gammons and Robert Noehren have joined its Editorial Board.

• Publication of the first two issues of this QUARTERLY has re-

BRIEFS ★ ★ ★

sulted in a liberal education for its editor and his assistants. Among other things, we have learned that it will be necessary to increase the subscription rate. Beginning with the Summer issue, which will appear early in July, the cost of a single copy will be fifty cents; an annual subscription, two dollars. Subscriptions will be accepted at the old rate (one dollar) until July 15.

• Students who attend the Summer Session at Austin will not only enjoy the benefits of direct instruction from the Organ Institute artist faculty in daily master classes and in individual lessons, but will also find an exceptional opportunity for association with the University of Texas Department of Music, which is recognized as one of the country's foremost.

• The Trustees of the Organ Institute, Inc., are grateful for the contributions received from sixty-nine Associate Members of the Institute, totaling $326.50. After deducting $69 for the Associates' subscriptions to the QUARTERLY, a balance of $257.50 is available for the Scholarship Fund. Applications have been received for many times this amount, presenting a difficult task for the Executive Committee, who must make awards by June 1.

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★ ★ EDITORIAL ★ ★

In our effort to develop more interest in organ music, we have to contend with many difficulties. Among them is the problem of tuning. Unfortunately, we as organists are too familiar with the sound of out-of-tune pipes and tend to ignore them until they reach the nerve-shattering stage. Discriminating concert goers and other musicians do not, however, and, in this respect, our music suffers from comparison with other kinds of music.

The situation may be aggravated by unsuitable registration, as when super couplers are drawn over full mixtures, emphasizing even slight out-of-tuneness and in many instances producing a bad imbalance between foundation and upper work. The opposite mistake of using too much foundation tone under mixtures, so that the latter, instead of becoming an integral part of the composite tone, stand apart as a kind of scratchy accompaniment to the fat 8′ sound, also produces an ugly effect and calls attention to out-of-tuneness. All such defects, together with imperfect speech or regulation, and extraneous noises in the tone, are unpleasant to others, even though we may have become accustomed to them.

It is true that no organ of any size can ever be completely in tune at a given moment. Even in a straight-through tuning, the first pipes tuned are likely to be slightly out of tune by the time the last pipes are reached. Conditions of installation often promote differences of temperature and pitch. Also, maintenance men frequently feel that they cannot charge churches enough for the work to justify spending an adequate amount of time on each organ. Often they turn on the blower, play a few chords on the full organ, and run a few chromatic scales, from which they pick out the most obviously out-of-tune pipes, whose harshness is actually violent, and pass over all the others.

Tuners seem to have many reasons why they should "not touch the mixtures," based upon the notion that they will "come back in again" with the next change in temperature, humidity, solar radiation, or with the equinoctial storms! Once when your editor assumed new duties at a metropolitan church, the local two-man tuning team introduced themselves and spoke with pride of their work on the large four-manual organ, which had enjoyed the benefit of their regular care since its installation, ten years before. At my urgent request, they undertook to "go through" the mixtures; and I heard their expressions of *surprised* consternation, as they *discovered* that the pipes of the Swell Mixture could only be reached by lifting out a whole row of trumpet pipes!

The net result of much of the prevailing theory and practice is that in many organs many of the stops are out of tune most of the time. The organ should be approximately in tune *when the organist plays it in the presence of an audience*, rather than at 2:30 a.m. on Monday morning, or in the middle of next July!

Let us begin now to re-educate tuners, church committees, and church architects, in an effort to bring organ music up to the high standards to which the public has become accustomed in the concert hall.

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